

Project:	Technical Assistance Services to the Modern Cooking Facility for Africa (MCFA)
Project Countries:	The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe (the Project Countries)
Sector:	Clean cooking
Funding sources:	Modern Cooking Facility for Africa, financed by Sweden, Norway and the European Union
Type of contract:	Consulting Services
Type of notice:	Invitation for Expression of Interest
Issue date:	21 November 2024
Closing date:	13 January 2025 at 12:00 (noon) local time in Helsinki (Eastern European time (EET)).

Assignment description

The overall objective of the Modern Cooking Facility for Africa (MCFA) programme is to accelerate access to modern, higher-tier clean cooking solutions and associated sustainable fuels for consumers in the seven Project Countries. MCFA incentivises private companies to establish or scale up their existing, innovative businesses in these African countries to create a local market for modern energy cooking solutions. Further information on the MCFA is available at <https://moderncooking.africa>.

Since its launch in early 2022, MCFA has concluded two funding rounds inviting interested companies to compete for funding. Currently, the portfolio consists of 13 investee companies (so called cooking service providers, CSPs). In addition, during the first half of 2025 Nefco expects to contract additional companies selected through the second funding round with the overall target of creating a portfolio of some 26 investees.

The financial, primarily results-based financing incentives offered by the MCFA are complemented with targeted technical assistance (TA). A description of the MCFA funding offer and requirements to contracted companies can be found in the [MCFA2 Application Guidelines](#).

Nefco as the facility manager of the MCFA intends to contract a qualified consulting company/organisation or a consortium of companies/organisations (the Consultant) to support the MCFA programme as a service provider to provide technical assistance to the MCFA investees (the Assignment).

The overall **objective** of this Assignment is for the Consultant to deploy targeted technical assistance, including business coaching and mentoring services for CSPs to underpin implementation of their business plans and to address specific challenges related to achievement of their clean cooking services (CCS) targets under MCFA agreements.

The **scope** of the TA provision under the Assignment includes but is not limited to the following three main components:

1. Business and operations development:
 - Business and strategy development;
 - Sales operations, including adoption of PAYGO systems;
 - Credit management, credit assessments, consumer protection and related capacity development;

- Financial modelling and identification of related key performance indicators;
 - Operational and logistical value chains including inventory management, warehousing and field operations, distribution networks;
 - Process improvements, shipment and clearance.
2. Gender inclusion:
- Support CSPs with the development of gender and sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) policies and gender action plans (GAP);
 - Help-desk support to CSPs in implementing their GAPs and related KPI reporting to Nefco;
 - Delivery of one-to-one and/or cohort-based training to CSPs on MCFA-specific gender inclusion aspects as well as on more general gender equality topics of relevance to the private clean cooking sector;
 - Support Nefco in its annual monitoring of CSPs' GAP implementation and KPI reporting.
3. Environment, social and governance (ESG) and e-waste management:
- Support CSPs in developing environmental and social policies and/or related management systems;
 - Support CSPs in developing e-waste policies and management plans, if applicable.

The TA delivery modalities are expected to vary, but in any case, they will consist of one-to-one support to CSPs, cohort-based trainings on topics of mutual interest to the CSPs as well as Consultant's contributions to MCFA Academy – a community of practice among contracted CSPs that Nefco plans to launch in 2025. In addition, the Consultant is expected to deliver up to two publishable knowledge products, such as blogs, short reports, or presentations per contract year, on topics covered by this Assignment.

Assignment start date and duration

The Assignment is expected to start in April-May 2025 and most of the TA will be provided during 2025-2027. All activities, including the gender help-desk activities and monitoring support to Nefco, will be completed at the latest by the end of 2029.

Budget

Maximum budget available for the Assignment is up to EUR 2,300,000 (exclusive of VAT). Ca. 40% of the budget is tentatively reserved for the gender inclusion component. The budget includes also a contingency reserve of 10% of the total budget.

Nefco will enter into a framework agreement with the selected Consultant under which specific TA services are called off separately subject to scoping and budgeting of CSPs' TA needs.

The Assignment is funded by Modern Cooking Facility for Africa (MCFA) via Nefco.

Consultant eligibility and profile

There are no eligibility restrictions on the nationality of the Consultant.

The Consultant will be a consulting company/organisation or a consortium of companies /organisations with in-depth experience in providing technical assistance/business advisory services

to private companies in the clean cooking sector in Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, the Consultant should have access to key expert resources (either inhouse or through consortium members/sub-consultants) related to subject matters covered by this Assignment, including financial and technical experts, gender inclusion experts, ESG and e-waste management experts as relevant for the SDG7/energy access/clean cooking sector. The Consultant having a physical in-country hub in one of the Project Countries, Zambia or Kenya in particular, from which one or more assigned experts would be available to carry out the Assignment is considered a significant advantage.

Based on the fields of expertise and the tasks mentioned above, the core team of the Consultant should consist of the key experts listed below:

- **Team Leader** with at least 10 years of combined experience in managing similar technical assistance assignments in Sub-Saharan Africa and prior experience from projects/programmes funded by international financiers in the SDG7/energy access/clean cooking space;
- **Senior TA Manager** with at least 10 years of professional experience from the SDG7/energy access/clean cooking sector and prior experience from managing the delivery of similar donor-funded TA programmes;
- **Gender Inclusion Lead** with at least 10 years of experience in gender mainstreaming, and expertise preferably in the energy access/clean cooking sector and in providing related technical assistance to private companies;
- **ESG Lead** with at least 10 years of expertise in conventional environmental issues and environmental and social safeguarding as well as specific experience from providing TA on environmental and social matters to private companies within the clean cooking/energy access sector.

During the full Request for Proposals stage, shortlisted Consultants will be required to provide a plan for identifying additional key expert resources necessary for the successful delivery of services under the Assignment. However, these additional key experts are to be identified during the Assignment, subsequent to contracting. The CVs of such key experts will be benchmarked against the required qualifications to be included in the Terms of Reference and must be separately approved by Nefco.

Submission of Expression of Interest

Interested Consultants are hereby invited to submit their Expressions of Interest for the purposes of being shortlisted. To assess the qualifications and competence of the Consultants seeking to be shortlisted, the information submitted should include the following:

- Company profile(s) (maximum 2 pages);
- Details of experience from similar assignments, including their locations (especially assignments in the Project Countries or references from other Sub-Saharan African countries) (up to 10 references, maximum 1 A4 page per reference); and
- The CVs of the core team of key experts listed above under “Consultant eligibility and profile” (maximum 5 pages per CV).

Expressions of Interest shall be submitted in English **in one pdf file** by email to Nefco at procurement@nefco.int with copy to heli.sinkko@nefco.int with subject: “MCFA TA Service Provider - Expression of Interest” to reach Nefco no later than **13 January 2025 at 12:00 (noon) local time in Helsinki (Eastern European time (EET))**.

Please allow sufficient time for the submission considering the time differences and noting that Nefco will not accept any late submissions.

Questions and answers

Any questions on this Invitation for Expression of Interest must be submitted in writing to Nefco via e-mail at procurement@nefco.int, with a copy to heli.sinkko@nefco.int, no later than **3 December 2024**. After this date, all questions will be compiled by Nefco exactly as received, without any editing. Answers to the questions submitted by the deadline will be published at <https://www.nefco.int/procurements/>.

Shortlist selection criteria:

The shortlist selection will be made based on the following criteria:

- Consultant's prior experience in providing technical assistance/business advisory services to private companies in the clean cooking sector in Sub-Saharan Africa and in the Project Countries in particular (40%); and
- Qualifications and competence of the Consultant's core team of experts as described above under "Consultant eligibility and profile" (60%).

Next steps

The shortlist of qualified and experienced Consultants will be made from responses to this invitation. The shortlisted consultants will be asked to submit technical and financial proposals, from which the highest-ranked consultant will be selected.

The preliminary timeline is as follows: Nefco expects to distribute a Request for Proposals with specific evaluation criteria, including Terms of Reference among the shortlisted Consultants by the end of January 2025. The expected submission deadline for consultants' proposals is end of March 2025 and the Assignment is expected to start during May-June 2025.

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